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Statement submitted by Legião da Boa Vontade, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/2014/1/Rev.1, annex II.

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Statement

Legião da Boa Vontade advocates education as being central to the global development agenda and its interrelationship with health, gender issues, productive inclusion, sustainability and social networking.

These recommendations are the result of more than six decades of work carried out by Legião da Boa Vontade and of the debates that it promoted during the tenth Solidary Society Network Multi-stakeholder Forum, a series of events held from 20 to 29 November 2013 in Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Paraguay and Uruguay. The meetings were supported by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat and attended by representatives of several entities of the United Nations system (United Nations Information Centre, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, United Nations Children's Fund and Global Compact Office).

Lines of action

In Brazil alone, from 2000 (the first year of the Millennium Development Goals) to 2013, 90 million services and benefits were provided to people living in a vulnerable or social risk situation, an investment largely made possible by the donations of individuals. Besides this, the organization also engages in advocacy on public policies by participating in councils for rights protection, a way in which civil society maintains dialogue with government administrators.

Communication has been an important part of the work of Legião da Boa Vontade since its foundation. It today uses an extensive network of radio and television stations, publications and the Internet in defence of social and environmental causes and to promote education, culture, social development and citizenship values. Having prepared hundreds of professionals who operate in the communication market with this unique vision, it is currently developing an audiovisual technical school in São Paulo, Brazil.

Education and the Goals

Commitment to high-quality education is the organization's focus. At a time when nations are defining their common priorities for education for the coming years (within the sustainable development goals), Legião da Boa Vontade argues for the need to add to the current progress indicators mechanisms that allow the assessment not only of proficiency in language and exact sciences, but also of the number of cases of intolerance, violence, unhealthy behaviour (including the consumption of both legal and illegal drugs), solidary and democratic participation, subjective well-being and adherence to sustainable habits.

Its schools receive children from 4 months of age, on a full-time basis, thus allowing their mothers to work and increase the family income. This same path is also followed by the Governments of the countries where Legião da Boa Vontade operates. They have challenged themselves to extend this benefit to the greatest possible number of children enrolled in the public school system.

Legião da Boa Vontade focuses on the poorest families, seeking to make up for the social disadvantages to which the children of such families are subject. Therefore, those assisted, and their families (generally just the mother), are

monitored by a multidisciplinary team, comprising social workers, psychologists, nutritionists and educators. The communities in which they live are included in social inclusion programmes and projects that contribute to sustainable development. To meet the demands for food, education, income, health and environment, this work is aligned with activities of public bodies, other organizations and partner professionals.

Legião da Boa Vontade has systematized its educational experience by means of the pedagogy of affection (directed at children up to 10 years of age) and the ecumenical citizen pedagogy (for children from 11 years of age). With its consolidated working methodology — the learning method through rational-emotional-intuitive research — and curricular structure that takes into account the parameters of each country, this educational line has increasingly been the object of scientific studies and training for educators in both public and private education systems in many nations.

Multi-stakeholder Forum

The tenth Solidary Society Network Multi-stakeholder Forum brought together government representatives, companies, civil society organizations, academic institutions and ordinary citizens to discuss the theme "Future paths for education: education on the post-2015 global development agenda". It took a universal approach, but one that did not fail to consider inequality and the cultural differences of each location.

Below are some of the recommendations and good practices suggested by the Forum:

(a) Link the educational process to sustainable development agendas at the local, regional, and national levels and implement policies to include young people in decision-making political processes;

(b) Prepare social responsibility plans in universities based on successful experiences and establish obligatory social or community practice in their curricula;

(c) Reformulate teaching plans and train teachers to favour greater and effective student protagonism;

(d) Set up and carry out, in basic education schools, programmes that support parents, teachers and legal guardians with regard to responsible consumption, providing them with the tools for addressing this theme with children of different ages and from different social backgrounds;

(e) Create new global indicators for assessing educational policies as far as gender equality is concerned, because, despite the advances in female education, there are still factors that generate inequality that are prejudicial to both boys and girls, the main one being discrimination against certain ethnic groups;

(f) Formulate, in countries with a history of colonization, affirmative action policies for the original languages within the educational context;

(g) Create, within the scope of the United Nations, a consultative, all-encompassing, ecumenical spirituality council, which will interact with local governments and with international organizations, and recognize spirituality as a

constitutive right of human dignity. The subject should be introduced at all educational levels and encouraged through mass communication.

Conclusion

Legião da Boa Vontade is open to cooperating with countries and organizations in expanding the activities presented herein and in replicating its social technologies. In the organization's view, the most efficient social technology is effective investment in education.